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The 1957 Huguenot Pilgrimage to Europe

by

Mrs. Grace Virginia Hendrickson Riddle

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"Super-G" Constellation aircraft — "The Huguenot"
International Airport, New York, September 11, 1957
Group of Huguenot Pilgrims embarking on the pilgrimage

The 1957 Huguenot Pilgrimage to Europe

by

GRACE VIRGINIA HENDRICKSON RIDDLE

No attempt will be made in these pages to elucidate the glorious history of our Huguenot forefathers other than as it was unveiled to our awareness in the progress of this first journey, for members of the tour, to the Huguenot shrines in Europe.

That so little publicity had been given prior to the venture is a matter of regret to the committee and of extreme dismay to Americans who have manifested deep interest in their Huguenot heritage. No single event since the organization of The National Huguenot Society in 1951 (formerly The Federation of Huguenot Societies in America) has so aroused the enthusiasm and has served to weld cohesion among the Member Societies as has this pilgrimage.

To those of us, privileged to have made the trip, it was a most memorable experience, "which seems so very much alive, nothing like it, a real privilege," as stated in a letter from Mrs. Rich, one of the Pilgrims, who has made many trips abroad.

Tourists so rarely "meet the people" is the lament of writers and the despair of many travelers to foreign countries. Meeting the people was the element of surprise and delight that made this visit so truly enjoyable. And being received by Her Majesty, Queen Juliana, at her summer home at Soestdijk, near Amsterdam, at the beginning of the tour, was indeed the high light of the many receptions to follow.

Interest in promoting a pilgrimage to Huguenot shrines in Europe was sparked by two related occurrences in 1955, when Mr. Emil C. Privat, President of The Huguenot Society of West Germany, was guest speaker in April of that year at the Fifth Annual Congress of The National Huguenot Society and favored exchange visits between Americans and Europeans of Huguenot ancestry. And at about this same time, Dr. Margaret Hayes Sebree, then President General of the National Society, was invited to be a member of a welcoming committee by Protestant groups of New Rochelle who were bringing to the United States two guest students from the Collège Cévenol in Le Chambon-sur-Lignon, France, Denise Beauvois and Michel Renut of L'Aubrecay near La Rochelle, which aroused much interest in Huguenot circles.

In April of 1957, Dr. Samuel B. Sturgis, the newly elected President General of the National Society, announced to the Annual Congress that Dr. Sebree was proceeding with plans for a pilgrimage.

There was no hint of the tragedy in store for us on that bright, crisp Wednesday of September 11, 1957, when we took off from New York International Airport in a "Super-G" Constellation aircraft that Trans World Airlines had gaily named *The Huguenot*. This tour would take us to England, Holland, West Germany, Switzerland, France, in that order, terminating on October 11th by flight from Orly Airport in Paris, five weeks later.

Alas, Dr. Sebree was able to be with us for only ten days. She became so ill, that on the advice of a physician, she was flown back to Washington. On our return to Idlewild Airport, a month later, we were shocked to learn that a funeral service for her was, at that hour, being held in St. John's Church, Washington, D.C., where she had been a communicant.

Thus losing our leader so early in the tour and also the best linguist of the group, it was indeed with grave apprehension that the writer attempted to obey Dr. Sebree's last request to her, to "carry on," officially. To have felt uneasiness, however, was to reckon without having met our gracious hosts, all of whom, happily, either were conversant with the English language or obtained for us excellent interpreters.

Another fortunate circumstance, at this point, was having as chairman of travel arrangements, the able Mrs. Maude J. Whittier, who had left nothing to be desired in the timing of our meetings with the Reformed Church groups.

London

Emerging at Croyden Airport in London early in the morning of September 12th we were met by Mr. Roland Hosie, who was to be with us as courier throughout the tour. The group was wide-awake by the time the attendant, locking our bags into the coach going to the Piccadilly Hotel remarked, saucily, "Well now, you've seen them all put in; if they aren't there, it's rawther inconvenient, isn't it?" Four Pilgrims sailing on the Queen Mary joined us later at the hotel.

We lost no time in seeing the sights of London that first day: the colorful changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace; the sleek little funereal black taxis; a visit to Harrods but failed to find, for souvenirs, the lovely English bone china cups and saucers such as are so plentifully displayed in New York.

Friday morning, September 13th, we were received by the United States Ambassador, the Honorable John Hay Whitney, at the American Embassy. Then off to the Tower of London via such familiar names and sights as Threadneedle Street, Petticoat Lane, the modest No. 10 Downing Street, and London Bridge. The resplendent Crown Jewels on display in the Tower made it well worth the trip.

In the afternoon we visited that beautiful creation of Sir Christopher Wren, Saint Paul's Cathedral. In this Cathedral on July 4, 1951, was dedicated the American Memorial Chapel. The writer was permitted by a kindly dean to see the name of her dear and only son inscribed on the Roll of Honor there in the Book of Remembrance, Britain's homage to 28,000 American dead.¹

¹ S/Sgt. Alpheus H. Riddle, 8th-9th AC, was a member of the eleven-man crew of "Jo-Jo's Special Delivery II" B-24 Liberator sent from England with two units of the Eighth Air Force to join the Ninth AC in Lybia for the bombing mission to Ploesti, Rumania, August 1, 1943. This bomber is unaccounted for since that date.

Saturday morning we left on an all-day trip to Canterbury. Our coach arrived too late for the tea planned for us by the Dean of the Canterbury Cathedral, but we were ushered into the crypt commemorating the 3,000 Huguenot refugees who were sheltered there in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. In this crypt they were permitted to set up their looms, which was the beginning of the weaving industry in England. In Old Weaver's Inn, founded by the Huguenots, we bought Pilgrim crosses. We had lunch in a quaint old inn called Queen Elizabeth's Guest Chamber, where, 'twas said, she had entertained a Prince who sought her hand in marriage.

Sunday morning brought the beginning of the many receptions for us in the French Reformed Churches, when Pasteur François DuBose called at the Piccadilly and personally escorted our group to l'Eglise Réformée in Soho Square — another early abode of the Huguenots. This service was followed by a cordial reception from the congregation.

In the afternoon we were taken to visit Windsor Castle by way of Stoke Poges, inspiration for Gray's "Elegy"; Eton College; and the fair fields of Runnymede, scene of King John's capitulation to the Barons in 1215.

This was the first stop of our five-week tour, but we were leaving England with regret that the stay had been all too short.

Holland

We were met by Pasteur Marc Jospin when we arrived in Amsterdam on Monday, September 16th, and he accompanied us to the Grand Hotel Krasnapolski and informed us that Her Majesty, Queen Juliana, would receive us at 11 A.M. Needless to say, we were thrilled when Her Gracious Majesty received us informally at her summer home, Soestdyk, shaking hands with each of us as we were presented by her secretary and then having us seated at two large round tables where she chatted with us for more than an hour, in the friendly manner of one who has lived in the United States, as indeed she had during World War II. Midway of the visit, the groups exchanged tables so the Queen could meet Miss Freda Walz when it was discovered that both are descended from that great Admiral of France, Gaspard de Coligny. Pastors C. Cabanis and J. Blommaert joined us at the Palace and at a signal that photographers had arrived, the Queen invited us to the terrace where pictures were taken which later appeared in the Amsterdam dailies and publications of the Walloon Church. Two days later we were privileged to visit the beautiful red velvet and gold-bedecked throne room where the Queen had presided at the opening of the Parliament on Tuesday.

The United States Consul General in the Netherlands, the Honorable Philip Chalker, greeted us at our hotel Monday evening at a pre-arranged small party.

Tuesday morning we toured this lovely city by canalboat and coach, visiting the flower markets and the Rijksmuseum. Here and there windmills could be seen on far stretches of land that had been reclaimed from



Her Majesty, Queen Juliana of The Netherlands, receiving the Huguenot Pilgrims on the steps of the summer home of Her Majesty at Soestdyk, September 16, 1957. From reader's left to right: 1st row: Mrs. Riddle, Mrs. Isobel Hill, Her Majesty, Queen Juliana, Dr. Seebree, Miss Freda Waltz, Mrs. Anna Rich, 2nd row: Mrs. Jennie Mudge, Mrs. Alexander Pratt, Miss Ruth Kershner, Mrs. William A. Stigler, Mr. Horace Ranney, 3rd row: Mrs. Maude J. Whittier, Pasteur C. Cabanis, Pasteur Marc Jospin, Mrs. Horace Ranney, 4th row: Pasteur Blommaert, Mrs. George O. Reynolds, Mrs. Priscilla Winslow Wood, and Mr. Roland Hosie.

the ocean. The white lace curtains and white doorsteps at the Dutch home are almost trademarks. Since these are mostly two-story houses, there are no elevators and the stairways being too narrow for moving furniture in and out, each home has a hoist on the roof for the purpose of bringing furnishings in through the windows.



Canalboats — Old Holland

At this point it is a little difficult to recall the sequence of events taking place in Leiden, Delft, and The Hague. A large number of parishioners served tea at one of the Walloon churches, Peterskerk, I believe, where John Robinson had preached before coming to America. We then went to the famous Leiden Library and, to our joy, found our names framed and hanging on the wall with that of our Dutch ancestors. My name was linked with that of Margaret DuMont, wife of Pierre Noe, a Huguenot, who came from Pays de Vaud and settled in Nieuw Amsterdam in 1663. Here we met Mr. H. H. Bolhuis, an authority on Huguenot history. We must remember that Holland has ever been a haven for the persecuted of the Protestant faith. Later we visited City Hall where we were greeted by the United States Ambassador, the Honorable Philip Young, before being presented to the Burgomeister who received us wearing the impressive silver chains of office and walked with us on a tour of the building.



Commission de l'Histoire des Eglises Wallonnes
et de la Bibliothèque Wallonne de Leyde

à Madame

*Grace Hendrickson Riddle,
Brooklyn, N.Y.*

en souvenir de la visite des descendants des Réfugiés Huguenots,
venus des U.S.A. au pays de Hollande, pour retrouver les
traces historiques et spirituelles de leurs glorieux ancêtres.

16—19 septembre 1957

Each member of the pilgrimage was presented with a souvenir (similar to the above presented to Mrs. Riddle) by the Commission of the History of the Walloon Churches and of the Walloon Library of Leyden, Holland.

Wednesday morning we were received graciously in the friendly American manner by Ambassador and Mrs. Philip Young at their home in Delft. Later we went on a buying spree of Delftware, the manufacture of which was established by a Huguenot.

We were guests for luncheon at the exclusive (men's) Witte Society, by courtesy of invitation of the Society's church members. Dr. Sebree was hailed with a round of applause as she responded to the toasts, in French. Before leaving Delft, Miss Freda Walz laid a wreath at the grave of William of Orange in Nieuwe Kerk. We were much impressed with the fact that all school children are taught four languages in Holland: Dutch, German, French, and English.

In Amsterdam we passed the house where Anne Frank had lived and where she had written her diary, while hiding out from the Nazis.

Germany

Dr. Sebree was so ill when we arrived in Duesseldorf the evening of September 19th that she was obliged to return home the following morning.

Friday morning we boarded our coach to Wesel and a visit to the fine old church where Peter Minuit, of Huguenot ancestry, had served as Deacon. A plaque near the church reminded us that he had "founded" New York. There was evidence of much bombing in this area.

In the evening we took advantage of the opportunity to hear Mozart's "The Magic Flute" sung at the opera house next door, which the hotel was able to arrange for us. A request for a glass of water in the dining room brought the amusing reply, "Why certainly; America's national drink."



Presentation of an old hymnal to Mrs. Riddle in behalf of Dr. Sebree by Mr. E. C. Privat in Bonn, Germany, September 20, 1957.

We arrived in Bonn, capital of West Germany, September 20th and were met by Mr. E. C. Privat, who had arranged a luncheon for us at Inter-Nations Guest House to meet members of the Huguenot Society and other distinguished guests. Mrs. Allport of Bronxville, N. Y., represented the United States Embassy. Later, pictures were made and Mr. Privat presented to Mrs. Riddle a precious old hymnal rescued from Berlin, a memento to be given to Dr. Sebree on return. Mr. Privat expressed the wish that we would further Dr. Sebree's vision for a "world-wide Huguenot federation." Mr. Richard Fouquet, editor of the magazine, *The German Huguenot*, presented us with silver and enamel Huguenot crosses. Leaving Bonn, Mr. Privat accompanied us from Bonn by steamer up the scenic Rhine to Remagen, sight of the bridge made famous by General Patton's army crossing the Rhine in World War II. The next day we departed by steamer from Koblenz to St. Goar, which brought into view the Lorelei of folklore legend. We went by coach for lunch at Mainz, birthplace of Gutenberg, en route to Heidelberg, famed for its university founded in 1386, and a center of the German Reformed, or Calvinistic faith in the sixteenth century. Martin Luther had spread the Gospel here, and is commemorated by a large statue. We passed through Worms, where Luther's trial was held.

It should be remembered that Martin Luther "wasn't motivated by a desire to split the Roman Catholic Church" but rather he acted because he was convinced that people should have freedom to think and freedom to worship.

The most delightful surprise was in store for me when we arrived at the Hôtel Nouvelle in Strasbourg the evening of September 23rd. There my dear friends, M. and Mme. Jean-Gaetan Roche and sons, Alain and Philippe, from Paris were waiting to greet us as soon as we arrived on French soil. They spent the next day with us and later we were to meet them again in Paris.

Also, a letter of greeting was handed to us from the Pasteur Pierre Bourguet, President le Conseil National in Paris, which read as follows:

Eglise Réformée de France¹

Paris

47 rue de Clichy

Sept. 12, 1957

To the members of the pilgrimage of the
American descendants of the Huguenots
Dear Brothers and Sisters:

At the time when you enter French territory and when you are going to begin at Strasbourg a tour of France, in the course of which you expect to travel through the important places, to which are attached for you as well as for us very precious spiritual memories, permit me to greet you in the name of the National Council of the Reformed Church in France.

After your brief stay in Strasbourg, where you will be given the welcome of Alsatian Protestantism, and after your trip through Switzerland, I know that you should proceed to Grenoble, then to the South and West of France, to end your tour by a stay in Paris. At that time I will very greatly enjoy greeting you in person, but I am sure you know that we ask God to lead us not only in the search for the evangelical and historical sources of Christian liberty, but also in the loyalty to Jesus Christ, to whom we both are so deeply attached.

Please accept, dear brothers and sisters, the assurance of my very cordial and devoted sentiments.

P. BOURGUET

This letter of welcome from Pasteur Bourguet was the prelude to the cordial receptions awaiting us in all of the Protestant centers throughout the remainder of our pilgrimage.

An invitation also was received at the hotel from Pasteur Bartholomé to come to a reception the next morning to be held in l'Eglise Réformée, where Calvin had preached. Pasteur Wagner received us and we were given a musical treat in a splendid organ recital. Mme. Georges Rempp served as the interpreter, and she continues as our valued correspondent. Mme. Rempp's son had just returned home from a year's study at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

¹ Translated from the French by Miss Lenora Myers, teacher of French at the Parkersburg High School, Parkersburg, W. Va.

In the afternoon, Mme. Rempp accompanied us to St. Paul's Cathedral, where we were welcomed by the former Pasteur Voeltzel, now Professor of Theology at the University of Strasbourg.

We were invited to a reception at the Hôtel Pax in the evening where a beautiful bronze bust of the now 85-year-old Albert Schweitzer, Alsatian philosopher, musician, and world-renowned humanitarian, was on display. Before departing, we all joined hands in singing that old favorite, "Faith of Our Fathers."

Our meals were served in the hotel "Maison Rouge" across the boulevard, and on our second appearance we were complimented by the hotel personnel themselves wearing Huguenot crosses. Monsieur Pescher, an earnest Bible student, inquired if we knew Billy Graham. We left Strasbourg with regret.

Switzerland

Our bus trips were now taking us through scenes long to be remembered — the blue lakes, the white-capped Alps in the distance, the gray houses with iron grillwork at the windows and red geraniums at the second and third story levels, and often a stork's nest atop the tall chimneys.



Reception given by U. S. Ambassador Hon. Henry J. Taylor in the American Embassy at Bern, Switzerland, September 24, 1957.

When we arrived in Bern, Switzerland, September 24th, we were received by our United States Ambassador, Honorable Henry J. Taylor, at the American Embassy, and he informed us he had been watching our progress in the European press and he gave us a most inspiring talk. When he was told of Dr. Sebree's illness that had forced her to return home, he immediately wrote her a personal note of regret which we forwarded to Washington, and on learning of her death, after our return, the following letter of condolence from him was received:

Embassy of the
United States of America

Bern, Switzerland
December 17, 1957

Dear Mrs. Riddle:

May I express through you to The National Huguenot Society my sympathies, and to her family my sympathies, in the passing of Dr. Margaret H. Sebree. It is such a profound loss.

I am deeply grateful for your generous and thoughtful letter and I do hope you will extend my best wishes throughout your great organization and thank your delegates again for their visit with me in Bern.

HENRY J. TAYLOR
Ambassador

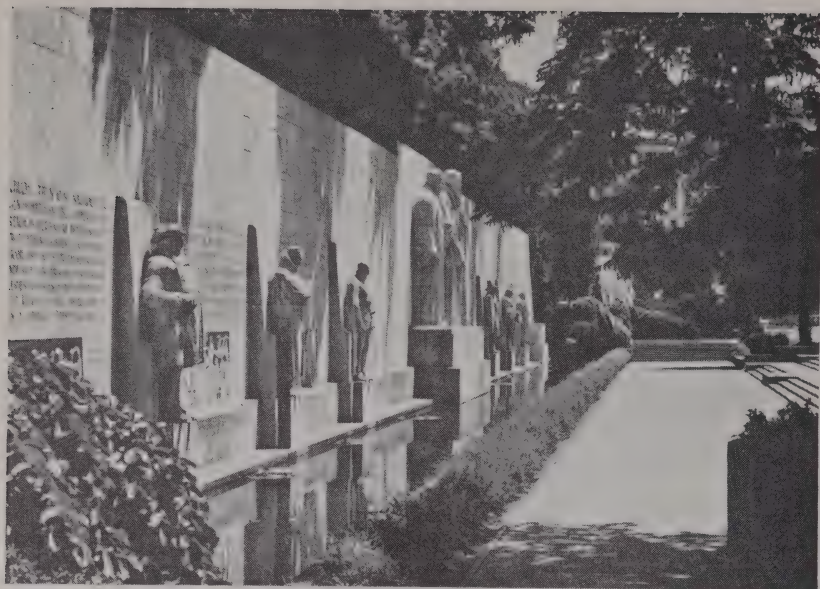
Mrs. Alpheus H. Riddle
Brooklyn, New York

We arrived in Geneva, that great Protestant center of Europe, September 25th, and our party was joined at the Hôtel du Rhone by Mr. and Mrs. John P. Goheen of Philadelphia who had been traveling in Europe. We were scheduled to go to Lausanne the following day and consequently had to miss, regretfully, the church reception planned for us also for the next day. Immediately a tour for the day was planned and we were escorted by Messrs. J. R. Aubert and Marcelle Galopin, and Mrs. Isabelle Teillac. The impressive Reformation Monument led to Saint Peter's Cathedral where Calvin had preached his fiery message, making of Geneva the citadel of Protestantism in Europe. A Council meeting held in this Cathedral, May 21, 1536, is considered the date of the beginning of the Reformation.



Reception given by U. S. Ambassador Hon. Franklin C. Gowen in the American Embassy, Geneva, Switzerland.

Thursday morning a group of us was received in the office of the United States Ambassador, the Honorable Franklin C. Gowen. Others of the party had made the trip to Mont Blanc, and Mr. Ramey became quite ill. In the afternoon we visited the Ecumenical Institute, center of



Reformation Monument — Geneva, Switzerland



Chateau de Chillon, Lac Lemman, Switzerland

the World Council of Churches, and were received by Dr. West, a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in New York. Tea was served. We were then taken to see the International Red Cross Building, inspired by the noble deeds of Florence Nightingale and founded by four Huguenots, the leader being Jean Henri Dunant, for whom Sweden will issue a commemorative stamp May 8th, centenary of the birth of the Red Cross.

The following day we made a stopover at Lausanne University on the way to Montreux by way of Lake Geneva. Here we visited Castle Chillon where was imprisoned for twelve years François Bonivard, a Huguenot made famous by Byron's poem "The Prisoner of Chillon."

The Huguenot poet, Agrippi d'Aubigné, of La Rochelle, author of "Les Tragiques," settled at Jussy, near Geneva.

Grenoble

On September 27th we went by coach to Grenoble, in France, driving along the most wonderful straight and narrow roads, said to have been built by Julius Caesar. We stayed at the Hôtel Trois Dauphins. In the afternoon we visited the Château de Vizille, the old castle of a famous Huguenot, the Duc de Lesdiguières, a Marshal of Henri IV. In the evening we were guests of the Syndicat d'Initiative de Grenoble. The President, M. Porte, gave us the welcome as Americans and as Huguenots, reminding us of the ties that bind our two countries since the time of Lafayette. Amid the general applause, Mrs. Riddle was invited to sign the Golden Book.

It will be remembered that France and America were commemorating in 1957 the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of the Marquis de Lafayette. It should ever be a matter of grateful remembrance, too, that, although not of known Huguenot blood, Lafayette pled the cause of the Protestants at the Court of King Louis XVI on his return to France which helped bring about the Decree of Toleration of 1787.

Chambon

From Grenoble we arrived, September 29th, at Chambon-sur-Lignon, a beautiful mountainous resort in the Cévennes, for three restful days at the Hôtel la Coustourelle, operated by a charming couple, M. and Mme. Paul Causse. They had invited the Mayor of twenty villages, M. Ch. Guillon, and Mme. Guillon as guests of the hotel for the evening. The Mayor proved to be a most distinguished and remarkable gentleman, in that he was so humble, as he spoke to us in perfect English on the history of Chambon as a resistance center during the war, and the more ancient and steadfast character of the Huguenots whose descendants still occupy the region.

Chambon is the home of the Protestant Collège Cévenol, founded in 1938 by Pasteurs André Trocmé and Edouard Theis, who chose the site not only because it offered healthy country living but because the town itself is a Huguenot center. All races, creeds, and nationalities are welcome. Members of the staff from the United States include Mr. and Mrs. Frank M. Baker and Mr. and Mrs. James Bean of New Rochelle.



Collège Cévenol, Chambon-sur-Lignon, Rhone Valley, France

Mrs. Elvert M. Davis of Fletcher, N. C., who was prevented by illness from going on the pilgrimage with us, donated a scholarship to the College.

Nîmes

Leaving Chambon September 30th and driving through the beautiful Rhone Valley to Nîmes, members who had looked forward to visiting the "Wilderness Museum" — the high light of any Huguenot journey — met with the greatest disappointment of the pilgrimage when our courier had arranged to bypass it. The museum is in a little hamlet, Mas Soubeyran, in the Cévennes, and was the birthplace of Roland whose exploits in the Huguenot struggle against the King's troops are legendary. Near here was born also Jean Cavalier who became the leader of the Huguenot refugees in England in the reign of Queen Anne.

En Souvenir du pèlerinage

à Nîmes le 30 Septembre 1957

C. Baudy

S. Ingouy

11/10/57

P. Brunel

P. Brunel

E. Calder René

P. Monod

Nîmes, France — Signatures in Presentation Book

On the first Sunday in September, Protestants from France and abroad hold services in the open at the Musée du Désert, in the manner of their forefathers who were forbidden the use of houses of worship. Miss Freda Walz hoped to terminate her travels abroad this year by a trip to the Museum in September.

Too little time had been allotted to us in this historic old city of Nîmes. We had one night only, September 30th, at the Hôtel Imperatore, but a reception was awaiting us by invitation of Pasteur Pongy, President du Consistoire de l'Eglise Réformée. Pasteur Eric Barde, President of the Conseil Regional, met us in the lovely art gallery-like rooms, remarking that it was their "first contact with Americans," and we felt that they liked us when the gentlemen presented each of us with a red dahlia from the centerpiece before leaving. A beautifully autographed book was given to us, "The Huguenots" (Epopée), by Raoul Stephen, in memory of our visit. Lafayette would have been right at home in Nîmes.

Aigues-Mortes

Leaving Nîmes we drove through miles of salt marshes, principal escape routes of the persecuted Huguenots, to the Tour de Constance, which after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, served as a prison for Protestants until 1768. From 1715 to 1768 the Tower was used only for women prisoners guilty of having been married by Protestant pastors or of having preached or having attended divine worship in the "wilderness." The best known is Marie Durand, who was shut up in the Tower when she was 15 (1730-1768), and who managed to scratch into the stone the determination of her convictions in the one word "Resistez." For the whole of the South of France this has become a Huguenot pilgrimage.

Carcassonne

The beautiful drive along the Mediterranean had sad memories, but an unexpected thrill awaited us as we came into view of the old Roman walled Cité de Carcassonne, a small, fortified city at the time of our Saviour, where it is thought the first Christian missionaries probably came from Rome around 150 A.D. In the middle of the sixteenth century when the Reformation burst over France, Carcassonne is thought to have received the visit of an unknown missionary preaching from the Bible. In 1561-62 there were from 200 to 400 Protestants in Carcassonne.

We were received by the Mayor and church officials when we entered the Hôtel de la Cité, which was once the Archbishop's Palace. After dinner, the Pasteur Frederic Brissaud, who spoke very good English, nevertheless brought young Gilbert Beaume as interpreter when he came to the hotel to meet us and invite us to visit the Reformed Church the next morning. Following this service, we were escorted to the Pasteur's home and spent a delightful hour, Mme. Brissaud showed us around her garden and little Marc shyly repeated "a, b, c." We hope little Marc has learned the alphabet now and will come to see us someday. He has a paternal "Auntie" living in New York City.



Walled Cité de Carcassonne, France

Montauban

October 2nd, having departed from Carcassonne via Toulouse for Montauban — site of a sixteenth century Huguenot massacre — we arrived at the Grand Hôtel du Midi for another one-night stay, which indeed was unfortunate for this section of Southern France is living Huguenot history. Pasteur Pierre Tirel and a committee of churchmen were waiting for our arrival, and arranged to escort us to l'Eglise St. James and later in the evening to a reception at Pasteur Tirel's home to meet members of the church. Here again we met a young boy named Marc, the Pasteur's 11-year-old son, who was ready for college. We were



La Mothe, St. Heraye

Aunie et Saintonge

Saint Maixent

Tokens used as identification by the Protestants for admittance to the holy exercises in 1754.

given a box containing three tokens, pieces used as identification by the Protestants for admittance to the holy exercises (Colloque du Bordelais Order, 17 December 1754).² Also the committee had autographed a book for us entitled "A Summary of Theology and Christian Ethics in the Form of a Catechism" (1729), with the following inscription:

"An affectionate and brotherly souvenir of the Consistory of the Reformed Church of Montauban, to the American Huguenots visiting the country of their fathers."

Grace be with all them that love
our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

Ephesians VI, 24.

To Pasteur Tirel's organ accompaniment we joined hands and sang "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," each in his own language.

The next morning Pasteur Tirel and other parishioners were on hand to see us off and direct us to points of interest: Jean Calvin's Institute; the jail where young girls were imprisoned to prevent Protestant marriages; and many other interesting features of this old Roman city. Pasteur Tirel remembered with hearty appreciation his rescue in World War I by an American soldier from Chicago.

² The use of méreaux, pieces which were used as identification to the Protestants, goes back to the year 1754.

Colloque du Bordelais Order, 17 December 1754.

Art. 7, XVII. Since we must be very careful and take precautions, each member will be given a particular mark or cachet to be handed over at the place of the assembly. Those who are without them will not be admitted at the holy exercises.



Reception by U. S. Consul General. Hon. Peter O'Donnell, Bordeaux, France

Still traveling in Southwest France we arrived on October 3rd at the Hôtel Splendide in Bordeaux, a provincial capital under the Romans which came under English rule in 1152; a seaport town, it became the escape route for many persecuted Huguenots. The United States Consul General, Mr. Charles P. O'Donnell of Chicago, was on hand at the hotel to offer his services. Later we were welcomed by a committee of churchmen including Pasteurs Cruse and Kressmann. The Reformed Church having been invited to participate in the festivities of our coming arrival in La Rochelle, Pasteur Kressman had arranged for us to broadcast our greetings to the latter city. Pasteur Cruse informed us of plans for our reception next day at the Maison du Vin. At this reception we met the charming Mme. Cruse who later took a party of us by car to points of interest to Huguenots; helped us shop for Huguenot crosses; and she told us that while the Huguenots in Bordeaux are in the minority, it is a powerful minority. Mme. Cruse has sent us some precious books, in French, pertaining to the Huguenots. Later, through her correspondence, we were to meet in Paris her dear friend Mme. C. Fernand Devise.

La Rochelle

Arriving at the Hôtel Champlain in La Rochelle on October 5th, the first to greet us were the exchange students, Denise and Michel — Michel had grown so tall we had to look up to him! The Mayor, Bernard de Saint-Affrique and daughter Olga, with churchmen and photographers were also in the welcoming party. The lovely Mademoiselle Olga was our faithful companion and guide throughout our stay, even coming to bid us farewell in the early morning of taking leave of this old fortified seaport, which was the chief Huguenot holdout and stronghold in the sixteenth century.

The three members of our tour from New Rochelle, N. Y., Mesdames Rich, Reynolds, and Whittier, were guests of the Mayor and Mme. de

Saint-Affrique at dinner in their home that evening. Later the same evening all members of the pilgrimage were received by Pasteur Pittet and members of the Reformed Church in a warm welcome at the Protestant school. Each visiting guest was given a lovely silver miniature Huguenot cross as a memento of the occasion.

Then, led by the Mayor, we were taken on a tour of the City, which had been illuminated in memory of the Huguenots who had perished in the siege of La Rochelle. An inspiring tribute.

Sunday morning we attended the service at the Protestant Temple, following which Mrs. Whittier presented the gift of a silver Communion Service which she had brought from the North Presbyterian Church in New Rochelle. Photographers were on hand to take pictures as we proceeded to the elaborate reception awaiting us at the Hôtel de Ville, presided over by the Mayor, city officials, and military personnel, both French and American.

The Mayor extended official greetings, as the far-off successor to Jean Guiton who had held out until the last in the siege of La Rochelle. He presented us with a fifth edition (1649) of Calvin's "Christian Institutions," a rare volume, and he also gave a miniature silver Plaquette of the City of La Rochelle to each member of the pilgrimage.



La Rochelle, France — Plaquettes of the City of La Rochelle were presented by His Honor Bernard de Saint-Affrique, President Conseil Municipal, to each member of the Pilgrimage.

Mrs. Riddle responded to the greetings with a letter from Dr. Samuel B. Sturgis, then President General of The National Huguenot Society. She then presented to the Mayor a hand-painted scroll, the gift of the Governor of West Virginia, the Honorable Cecil H. Underwood, and a small flag of the State of West Virginia, Mrs. Riddle's home state. Mrs. Anna H. Rich received a round of applause as she presented a scroll and relayed, in French, the greetings of her own State Governor, the



Mrs. George O. Reynolds of New Rochelle, N. Y., presenting a fragment of stone from doorstep of French Church in New Rochelle, N. Y., built in 1697, to His Honor the Mayor, Bernard de Saint-Affrique in La Rochelle, France, October 6, 1957.

Honorable Averill W. Harriman of New York. Mrs. George O. Reynolds of New Rochelle presented a framed stone chip taken from the original doorstep of the old French Church in New Rochelle, built in 1697. Miss Freda Walz presented a plaque, the gift of The Huguenot Society of Florida, which she organized in 1952. Other members of the tour presented small flags of their states. The Rev. Gilbert Darlington, then heading the American Bible Society and President of The Huguenot Society of America, sent a Bible printed in Paris as a gift from the Bible Society to the Library of La Rochelle.

Sunday afternoon we were driven to l'Centre Educatif at L'Aubrecay, a boys school headed by M. Marc Beauvois, father of Denise. This was one of our most restful trips, a beautiful fall day in the country. A luncheon had been prepared and was served by the students, and they had arranged a delightful surprise for us. At each place was a gift-wrapped, hand-carved fine wooden Huguenot Cross. The one I received, pictured at the conclusion of this article, was made by François Sergent.

A great many of the Church congregation also drove out to the school, and there we met Mlle. Mery Eynard, whose sister, Mrs. Arthur C. McBride, is the wife of the Professor of French at the West Virginia University. Mrs. McBride has kindly assisted in the translation of some French periodicals received from M. Bolhuis of Amsterdam. There we also met Mme. Auzanneau and her son Jean-Pierre, who came on a six-months student exchange tour to the United States in 1958-1959.



Monument of Admiral Gaspard de Coligny — Paris

We were now taking leave of many newly found friends on the last lap of our tour en route to Paris via Tours, Poitiers, Saumur, the latter famed for its Huguenot university of the same name, founded in 1600, where William Penn was our best-known student. This route leads through the chateaux country and we made stops at Amboise, Chaumont, and Azay-le-Rideau; also visited the Chartres Cathedral which witnessed the crowning of Henri IV; and then on to Versailles.

Friends were waiting to greet a number of the group when we arrived October 8th at the Hôtel de Paris in the evening. Pasteur Robert Court met us at the Reformed Church next morning which commemorates the American war-dead (1917-18). We continued on to the Temple de l'Oratoire where Miss Walz laid a wreath at the statue of Admiral de Coligny. In the afternoon we were welcomed at the Conseil Protestant de la Jeunesse, center of documentation, by M. Philippe de Felice, who had on exhibit many rare and priceless volumes of ancient Christian literature. In the library we were greeted by Mme. Gerard Vernes, waiting to take us to tea at the beautiful home of her mother, Mme. Devise, one of whose ancestors had been imprisoned for fifteen years in the Tour de Constance. The following day we toured Paris with Mme. Jean Roche and had tea at her home meeting her lovely family before taking off to the airport.

In closing, I should like to bring to the attention of our overseas hosts the coming celebration, in 1962, of the 400th anniversary of the landing in Florida of Jean Ribault in 1562, hoping they will plan a return pilgrimage to the United States of America.

My grateful acknowledgements to the Rev. Alfred Janavel, Pastor of the Waldensian Church, and my good friends, Katherine King Page and Beatrice Comp Mackenzie, without whose aid at this time this report of the pilgrimage could not have been prepared.

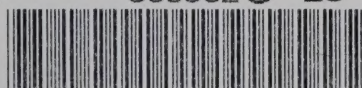


Huguenot Cross, carved on wood by François Sergent, student, and presented to Mrs. Riddle.

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